

J.M.J.

Dear Parishioners,

Pentecost is the feast of human unity, understanding and sharing. We can all see how in our world, despite us being closer to one another through developments in communications, with geographical distances seeming to disappear – understanding and sharing among people is often superficial and difficult. There are imbalances that frequently lead to conflicts; dialogue between generations is hard and differences sometimes prevail; we witness daily events where people appear to be growing more aggressive and belligerent; understanding one another takes too much effort and people prefer to remain inside their own sphere, cultivating their own interests. In this situation, can we really discover and experience the unity we so need?

The account of Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles, which we heard in the first reading, is set against a background that contains one of the last great frescoes of the Old Testament: the ancient story of the construction of the Tower of Babel. But what is Babel? It is the description of a kingdom in which people have concentrated so much power they think they no longer need or depend on a God who is far away. They believe they are so powerful they can build their own way to heaven in order to open the gates and put themselves in God's place. But it's precisely at this moment that something strange and unusual happens. While they are working to build the tower, they suddenly realize they are working against one another. While trying to be like God, they run the risk of not even being human – because they've lost an essential element of being human: the ability to agree, to understand one another and to work together.

This biblical story contains an eternal truth: we see this truth throughout history and in our own time as well. Progress and science have given us the power to dominate the forces of nature, to manipulate the elements, to reproduce living things, almost to the point of manufacturing humans themselves. In this situation, praying to God appears outmoded, pointless, because we can build and create whatever we want. We don't realize we are reliving the same experience as Babel. It's true, we have multiplied the possibilities of communicating, of possessing information, of transmitting news – but can we say our ability to understand each other has increased? Or, paradoxically, do we understand each other even less? Doesn't it seem like feelings of mistrust, suspicion and mutual fear have insinuated themselves into human relationships to the point where one person can even pose a threat to another? Let's go back to the initial question: can unity and harmony really exist? How?

The answer lies in Sacred Scripture: unity can only exist as a gift of God's Spirit, which will give us a new heart and a new tongue, a new ability to communicate. This is what happened at Pentecost. On that morning, fifty days after Easter, a powerful wind blew over Jerusalem and the flame of the Holy Spirit descended on the gathered disciples. It came to rest upon the head of each of them and ignited in them a divine fire, a fire of love, capable of transforming things. Their fear disappeared, their hearts were filled with new strength, their tongues were loosened and they began to speak freely, in such a way that everyone could understand the news that Jesus Christ had died and was risen. On Pentecost, where there was division and incomprehension, unity and understanding were born.

But let's look at today's Gospel in which Jesus affirms: “When he comes, the Spirit of truth, He will guide you to the whole truth”. Speaking about the Holy Spirit, Jesus is explaining to us what the Church is and how she must live in order to be herself, to be the place of unity and communion in Truth; He tells us that acting like Christians means not being closed inside our own spheres, but opening ourselves towards others; it means welcoming the whole Church within ourselves or, better still, allowing the Church to welcome us. So, when I speak, think and act like a Christian, I don't stay closed off within myself – but I do so in everything and starting from everything: thus the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of unity and truth, can continue to resonate in people's hearts and minds, encouraging them to meet and welcome one another. Precisely because it acts in this way, the Spirit introduces us to the whole truth, who is Jesus, and guides us to examine and understand it. We do not grow in understanding by closing ourselves off inside ourselves, but only by becoming capable of listening and sharing, in the “ourselves” of the Church, with an attitude of deep personal humility. Now it's clearer why Babel is Babel and Pentecost is Pentecost. Where people want to become God, they succeed only in putting themselves against each other. Where they place themselves within the Lord's truth, on the other hand, they open themselves to the action of his Spirit which supports and unites them.

The contrast between Babel and Pentecost returns in the second reading, where the Apostle Paul says: “Walk according to the Spirit and you will not be brought to satisfy the desires of the flesh”. St Paul tells us that our personal life is marked by interior conflict and division, between impulses that come from the flesh and those that come from the Spirit: and we cannot follow all of them. We cannot be both selfish and generous, we cannot follow the tendency to dominate others and experience the joy of disinterested service. We have to choose which impulse to follow and we can do so authentically only with the help of the Spirit of Christ. St. Paul lists the works of the flesh: they are the sins of selfishness and violence, like hostility, discord, jealousy, dissent. These are thoughts and actions that do not allow us to live in a truly human and Christian way, in love. This direction leads to us losing our life. The Holy Spirit though, guides us towards the heights of God, so that, on this earth, we can already experience the seed of divine life that is within us. St. Paul confirms: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace”.

Dear friends, we must live according to the Spirit of unity and truth, and this is why we must pray for the Spirit to enlighten and guide us to overcome the temptation to follow our own truths, and to welcome the truth of Christ transmitted in the Church. Luke's account of Pentecost tells us that, before rising to heaven, Jesus asked the Apostles to stay together and to prepare themselves to receive the Holy Spirit. And they gathered together in prayer with Mary in the Upper Room and awaited the promised event.

Like when it was born, today the Church still gathers with Mary and prays: “Veni Sancte Spiritus! - Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love!”. Amen.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Father Newcomb

It is that time of year again. We are in need of three new members for the Parish Advisory Council. We thank Pat Cal, Toni Ennis and Dan Kavanagh for their three years of service on the council. Please contact the office if you are interested.

**Memorial Day** is Monday, May 25th. Mass will be celebrated at St. Mary's Cemetery at 9am. Please bring a lawn chair. The parish office will also be closed .

Brother Victor from the Franciscan Missionary Brothers will be visiting our parish on the weekend of May 30th/ 31st. He will be speaking at all Masses on behalf of the Mission Appeal. Please extend him a warm welcome.



**S.M.A.R.T. Car Wash**  
**Order Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel #: \_\_\_\_\_

Car (s) #: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$5 = \_\_\_\_\_

**No Refunds**

The Port Jervis and Milford Knights of Columbus Councils (#471 & #13935) are hosting their annual charity Golf Outing on Wednesday May 27th, at the High Point Country Club. Registration at 11:00 am, scramble format, lunch and dinner included, raffles and prizes, cost is \$100 per golfer by May 15th. Please call Steve Riordan (845) 629-3642 or Tom Hogan (570) 296-7210.

The National Shrine of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Middletown, is having a Mass for Healing on May 28th, June 25th, and July 30th at 7pm.

**ANNOUNCED MASSES**

- Monday, May 25 (Bede the Venerable, priest and doctor of the Church; Gregory VII, pope; Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi, virgin)**  
9:00am *Mass at St. Mary's Cemetery*
- Tuesday, May 26 (Philip Neri, priest)**  
9:00am Nicholas Iwanciw and Intentions of the Fedoruk family, by Olga Fedoruk
- Wednesday, May 27 (Augustine of Canterbury, bishop)**  
9:00am Jean Schoonover, by Sally Von Sauers  
Judy Burton, by Barbara D. Anderson
- Thursday, May 28**  
9:00am Josef Kucher, by Catherine Westfall  
In Thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity, Blessed Mother, St. Jude, and St. Anthony, by Toni Marion
- Saturday, May 30**  
4:00pm The parishioners of St. Mary's
- Sunday, May 31 (Most Holy Trinity)**  
8:30am Joseph Hartmann, by the Hartmann family  
11:30am Ralph and Josephine Rodi, by Joseph and Angela Portella

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:**

Ida Lissner, Joann Wilcox, Jonathan Saletto, Marion Rohner, Nick Moscatiello, Jeff Sauschuck, Anna Onuschak, Jackie Mundy, Theresa Fuller, Kelly Quick, Denise Paz, Sandy Osbourne, Jose Maldonado, Angela Grillo, Amanda Evelech, Anna Jenks, Allan Van Starrex, Donald Wolff, Walter Szpakowicz, Michael Barnes, William Lincoln, Mike Fuller, Vada Glass, Joe Brennan, Betty Brennan, Owen Brennan, Richard Samek, Agnes Murray, John McKean, Andrea Fedoruk, Betty Corcoran, Lisa Donahue, Charles Fitz-Randolph, Angela Portella, Pauline Portella, Florence Marino, Angela Lilo, Ana-Lucia Stasilli, Jeremiah Stasilli, Radomski family, Hiegle family, Nick Cirillo, Bobby Kochka, Dominic Fontana, Mary Platania, and Nicholas Marinaro.

***The All You Can Eat Breakfast is May 31st from 8am until 11:30am , the last one until September.***

The collection for May 16/17 was \$4,922.  
Thank you for your continued generosity.

***Liturgical Ministers for May 30/31***

MASS	LECTOR	MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION	ALTAR SERVERS
4:00PM	T. LOTHIAN	J. SNELLINGER, A. WITKOWSKI, L. AVELLA	B. BIRKENSTOCK, V. AND E. WITKOWSKI
8:30AM	T. WEBB	N. ARROYO, V. LIVINGSTON, BABEY	T. LAMOREAUX, S. PHILLIPS, S. MOREJON
11:30AM	P. CAL	T. MARION, N. SMITH, L. BUCZEK, H. MARINARO	J. MALDONADO, G. AND L. ROBERTSON